

## *Maureen Campbell Joins NH Veterans Home Staff as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist II*

TILTON, NH: Maureen Campbell, a resident of Loudon, NH, has joined the staff at the New Hampshire Veterans Home (NHVH) as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist II in LEDU, the Life Enhancement Dementia Unit of the Home. She says, "It's an honor to work in a home-like setting with such well-planned living areas. The LEDU unit is a state of the art facility that promotes dignity and quality of life. The design of the 'neighborhoods' prevents over stimulation as well as boredom—at the same time, it gives residents a private space to be alone if they choose. Our interdisciplinary team shows love, humor, and respect while caring for our veterans as if they were family."

At the Veterans Home, Campbell works with residents with neurological conditions, chronic pain, head injuries, dementia, spinal cord injuries, and also provides general rehabilitation. Using an integrated approach, she uses residents' cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual strengths to increase their independence. Her other responsibilities include family, resident, and staff education, community resource referrals, intergenerational programs, community entertainment, family conferences, in-service education, and team meetings.

Campbell has over seventeen years experience working in therapeutic recreation. At Jackson Memorial Rehabilitation Center in Miami, Florida, she provided aquatic therapy, community re-entry, and adaptive recreation techniques. Between 1996 and 2007, she developed the therapeutic recreation program at Hillsborough



County Nursing Home and Rehabilitation Facility's skilled nursing facility.

Her experience with chemically dependent, psychiatric, spinal cord injured, traumatic brain injured, orthopedic, and long-term care populations, combined with her love of recreation, enable her to use a variety of therapeutic recreation interventions to assist individuals in restoring, remediating, and rehabilitating physical, psychological, social and mental disorders.

Therapeutic Recreation is an important component of the care the residents receive at the Veterans Home. Campbell explains, "Therapeutic Recreation

addresses the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of the residents." She continues, "The American Therapeutic Recreation Association defines the purpose of *therapeutic recreation* as 'to restore, remediate, or rehabilitate in order to improve functioning and independence as well as reduce or eliminate the effects of illness or disability. The primary purpose of recreation services is to provide recreation resources and opportunities in order to improve health and well-being.'"

Therapeutic recreation is provided by professionals who are trained, certified, and/or licensed to provide therapeutic recreation. Campbell adds, "Therapeutic Recreation is much more than simple entertainment. Recreational therapy is extremely individualized to each person, their past, present and future interests and lifestyle. It is an activity that uses treatment, education, and recreation services to help people with illnesses, disabilities, and other conditions to develop and use their leisure in ways that enhance their health, independence and well-being."

Some examples of therapeutic recreation activities at the Veterans Home include: cooking groups, art therapy, woodworking, Arizona horseshoes, bowling, "Fit for Life" exercises, gardening, intergenerational programs, music therapy (including jug band), table games, memory Bingo, walking programs, computer-based activities, memory books, reminisce-based motor stimulation, and relaxation techniques.

Campbell is a 1990 graduate of Western Carolina University, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree in Therapeutic Recreation (BSTR). As the New Hampshire state representative of the American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA), she has many opportunities to find out what's going on across the country in her area of expertise. ATRA is the largest national membership organization representing the interests and needs of recreational therapists. The association provides many membership services focusing on professional practice, professional development, external affairs, advocacy, treatment networking, and educational services. ATRA leads the profession with nationally recognized professional standards of practice, code of ethics, and competency guidelines.

*The New Hampshire Veterans Home will be expanding the Recreation Therapy section of our website soon--please stay tuned!*